



DHS Matters!

Michigan Department of Human Services • Lansing, Michigan • October 31, 2005
Produced by DHS Office of Communications, Suite 1510, Grand Tower, Lansing
Submit stories by e-mail to DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov

Serving victims of Hurricane Katrina

From Susan Saxton and Geraldine Monroe, Family Independence Specialists

Macomb County DHS, Warren

SaxtonS@michigan.gov and MonroeG2@michigan.gov

Note: The authors were among 25 DHS employees that went to the Gulf Coast in September to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina.

We left Michigan Sept. 22 and got to Mobile, Ala. that afternoon. We had a two-hour training session that day. We started taking assistance applications at 7 AM on Sept. 23 and continued each day until 6 PM Sept. 27. We left Mobile Sept. 28 and returned to our normal work on Sept. 29.

We were part of 250 people from Ohio, Kentucky, Alabama and Michigan. We were at the Civic Center from 6:30 AM until 6 PM; the doors opened by 6:50 AM. The Alabama commissioner and the employees of FEMA made sure that we were taken care of. They treated us like we were part of their team from the Alabama Department of Human Resources in Mobile.



Above: Michigan DHS volunteers that served in the Gulf Coast.

We were processing a special five-day Emergency Disaster Food Stamp program. Mobile County needed to process 35,000-45,000 people within that period through a waiver they received from the Federal government. We took a total of 52,488 applications.

continues on page 2, see "Hurricane Katrina relief"

Click to read...

Local office stories.....2-4

Detroit area Meals on Wheels holiday promotion

From Susan C. Bell

Wayne County Greydale-Grandriver District, Detroit

BellS3@michigan.gov

I have been a volunteer with the Detroit Area Agency on Aging Holiday Meals on Wheels program for several years. Last year I raised \$350 in donations from friends and coworkers at Greydale DHS to contribute to the Area Agency on Aging holiday fundraiser.

Proceeds from the annual fall-winter fundraiser are dedicated to providing hot meals for homebound seniors during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. There continues to be a great need and I plan to be hard at work again this year doing my part!

Each Holiday Meal Card costs \$5. Once purchased the supporter can give the card(s) to friends and loved ones or sign and donate the cards to Meals on Wheels to distribute with meals to seniors during the holiday season. Often the meal and card, along with a heartfelt smile from the volunteer, are the only communication a senior receives during the holidays.

The Detroit Area Agency on Aging is always in need of volunteers to assist in any capacity because hunger takes no holiday. For more information call 313-964-MEAL (6325) or write to Detroit Area Agency On Aging, 1333 Brewery Park, Suite 200, Detroit, MI 48207-2635. For contributors, please make checks payable to Detroit Meals on Wheels.

Hurricane Katrina relief *from page 1*

We saw mostly seniors and disabled people at our table. Our duties consisted of helping those who were not eligible for Food Stamp benefits. We took applications and did the interviews and the applications were run up to Montgomery twice a day for data entry.

Many of us ventured out to see some of the sites that were hit the hardest in Mobile. Seeing first hand what a hurricane can do was unbelievable. We laughed and we shared some tears with these victims, who shared pictures and stories of their experience.

We got pulled over the by the police at one point; they thought we were looters. When we showed them our state of Michigan IDs and told them that our governor wanted us to bring back some pictures, the police sat for about one-half hour talking to us about how this area got hit so bad, explaining how the surges came in. He thought we were journalists!

We have so many memories of clients; to a person they were grateful and couldn't believe that Michigan sent people to help. We also had some funny times with some of them and we heard many heartbreaking stories. We got angry over much of that, as help was not always available.

This was a very rewarding experience for us. We are grateful our government allowed us this opportunity to assist those who were truly in need of our help. It has been really hard catching up with all the work we left behind but we would do it again in a heartbeat.



One of many pictures of destruction DHS employees viewed in Alabama.



In September, Marquette County DHS employees teamed up with Marquette County personnel, who are housed in the same building, to hold four bake sales for Red Cross-Katrina Disaster relief. After indulging in four weeks of baking and eating, the donation for the Red Cross netted \$1,104. (We're going to have to use "the biggest loser" concept for the next fundraiser!) Marquette allowed an extra casual jeans day each week where employees gathered \$336 for Katrina relief. Pictured are [Dawn Tipsword](#), accounting assistant, and community resource coordinator [Louise Reichert](#), both of Marquette County DHS

– from [Matthew Smart](#)

Mid-Michigan back to school clothing event

From Dan Carley, Community Resource Coordinator
Clinton-Gratiot County DHS
CarleyD2@michigan.gov

The Clinton & Gratiot County DHS offices recently held their annual back to school clothing events in their respective counties.

Both were very successful with over 500 children from almost 200 families receiving clothing with new underwear and socks to start the school year off.

The school-age clothing was donated from area families, churches and social service agencies and then distributed free to families in need.

In addition, new backpacks and other school supplies were passed out.

This was Gratiot County second year doing this event and Clinton County's first.

Jackson County employee recognition lunch celebrates “school daze”

From Lu Ann Hammond

Jackson County DHS, Jackson

HammondL2@michigan.gov

Jackson County DHS staff enjoyed a “school cafeteria lunch” Oct. 12 that was complete with lunch trays and cartons of milk served up by three adorable lunchroom ladies.



Left to right, **Joy Shepard**, **Denise Fortner** and **Shirley Wilson** are Jackson County staff that acted as “lunch line ladies” (food servers) during the celebration Oct. 12.

The theme of this year’s Employee Recognition Day was School Daze. Our administrative support supervisor, **Pam Roxberry**, came up with the creative idea. With the help of nine committee members – **Lui Hammond**, **Phyllis Wilson-Glasper**, **Shirley Wilson**, **Judy Bell**, **Beth Tilmann**, **Mary Hamilton**, **Joy Shepard**, and **Denise Fortner** – she turned the conference room into a school cafeteria.

The tables were decorated with school supplies. Staff were encouraged to wear their favorite school attire and to bring in their yearbooks, senior pictures and other memorabilia of years gone by. The yearbook staff took pictures of each class after classifying

them as senior-plus, seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshmen according to the seniority list and created a DHS High School Yearbook that was distributed to all staff members. The school nurse even passed out treats to all of the students.

Safety Patrol members and a stern vice-principal maintained order in the lunchroom. Luckily no food fights broke out! It was a delightful, fun-filled way to recognize staff for their dedication and hard work.

Van Buren County observed Lee National Denim Day Oct. 7

From Lorilea Jerue

Van Buren County DHS, Hartford

Jeruel@michigan.gov

While Van Buren County DHS observed Lee National Denim Day in the past, this year’s event went above and beyond all expectations. In order to raise awareness of how cancer has touched all of our lives, staff were encouraged to write names on blue hearts and post them on three boards:

- Honor Board, for those currently waging a battle against cancer.
- Survivor Board, for those who have won their fight.
- Memory Board, for those who have lost their fight with cancer.

On Oct. 5 we held a bake sale and on Oct.7 all staff wearing denim donated a minimum of \$5 to the cause. The end result – we raised \$164.50 through the bake sale and \$435.50 on Denim Day – was a total of \$600 we forwarded to Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, which uses 100 percent of all donations for breast cancer research and educational programs. Congratulations to Linda Dean and Sheryl Ferguson for leading a great event and to all those at Van Buren DHS staff members that supported the effort!



Recoupment specialist **Linda Dean** and word processing assistant **Sheryl Ferguson** (right) joined forces and together led this year’s campaign to raise funds for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Harley's Angel's Ride & partner event nets \$34,700 for Macomb Co. foster kids

From Karen Urquhart, Community Resource Coordinator

Macomb County DHS, Clinton Township

UrquhartK@michigan.gov

"Ladies and Gentlemen, start your engines!"

The sound of over 600 motorcycles roared to life upon this command, chanted by 14 former foster children. Hundreds of onlookers then gathered to cheer on the motorcyclists as they departed on a 60-mile police escorted ride to raise money for abused and neglected children.



This first of a kind scenario took place Sept. 25 at Wolverine Harley-Davidson in Clinton Township where Macomb County DHS, in partnership with Wolverine Harley-Davidson and SerendipityExperience.org, hosted the first Harley's Angels Ride for Foster Care.

Over 200 volunteers worked diligently for many months to plan and organize this event. These volunteers were comprised mainly of DHS staff, family friends and neighbors of DHS staff, retired DHS staff, and foster parents. In addition to all of the hours of personal time contributed, employees from all four Macomb DHS offices raised close to \$3,000 from casual days, ice cream socials, hot dog lunches and other events to contribute toward this cause. As recognition for their efforts, staff were given the status of corporate sponsors for their generosity and support.

Metro Detroit radio station WRIF was on hand Sept. 25 to deliver the third Annual Biker Bash 2005 that provided great food and the entertainment of three live bands. Paula Tutman from WDIV Channel 4 came out to kick off the ride as the keynote speaker and rode in the ride herself as a passenger. An astounding 1,100 people participated in these two great events which raised over \$34,700 for Macomb County foster children.

The end result of this magnificent day was not only an amazing time of fun and goodwill but knowing that 100 percent of these proceeds will improve the quality of life for our kids in care.



Part of the 1,100 people that participated in two events that raised \$34,700 for Macomb County foster children.

DHS Matters! is a product of Michigan's Department of Human Services
Marianne Udow, Director • Karen Stock, Director, Office of Communications
Larry VanDeSande, editor • Submit stories by e-mail to: DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov